

VZCZCXRO1330  
PP RUEHRN  
DE RUEHRN #0055/01 2521013  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P R 091013Z SEP 09  
FM USMISSION UN ROME  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1143  
INFO RUEHC/USAID WASHDC  
RUEHRC/USDA FAS WASHDC  
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHINGTON DC  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0358  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0285  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS 0233  
RUEHRN/USMISSION UN ROME 1217

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 05 UN ROME 000055

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

USDA FOR DOUVELIS/RIEMENSCHNEIDER; NSC FOR PRATT; AID FOR BRADLEY

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAGR PHUM](#) [EAID PREL](#) [FAO UN](#)

SUBJECT: COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY REFORM PROCESS GENERALLY  
MOVING IN RIGHT DIRECTION

11. (U) This message is sensitive but unclassified for USG only.  
Please handle accordingly.

-----

Summary

-----

12. (SBU) The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) Bureau convened on September 4 the final negotiating session of its "Contact Group" - a group comprising FAO Member States, international organizations, and NGOs drafting a plan to reform both the structure and output of the CFS during this 35th anniversary year. The group made significant progress on several contentious issues in the 53-paragraph third draft. The U.S., helped by Australia, New Zealand, and Canada, sought to postpone planning for a second phase of the reform process (including launch of a "Global Strategic Framework" pushed by Brazil and others) until demonstrated success of the first phase. The UN Secretary General's (SYG) representative, David Nabarro, read a letter (text at paragraph ten) from the SYG noting four concerns with CFS reform and urging members to "take time to get these issues right." While the letter is consistent with our desire to keep CFS governance and bureaucracy "light," to include the private sector as full members, and to ensure CFS will assist the High Level Task Force (HLTF) in better coordinating the UN system, it may also have underscored the New York/Rome division over food security policy leadership. The CFS Bureau will synthesize comments and produce a final draft to be presented to Members at the October CFS session where "reform" will be the main agenda item. Post is drafting a letter to the CFS Bureau Chair detailing our remaining concerns, and will email it shortly to Washington action offices for comment/clearance. End summary.

-----

FAO Asst DG on CFS Reform

-----

13. (SBU) The Charge, A/DCM, and USDA MinCouns met with FAO Assistant Director General Hafez Ghanem at the latter's request, immediately prior to the final CFS Contact Group session. Ghanem, who is responsible for CFS at FAO, reported on his meeting with Nabarro a day earlier and said he agreed with the four concerns raised by the SYG's letter. Ghanem assured us that FAO management believed successful reform of CFS would be achieved via a small Secretariat - "no larger than the current one" - and a reformed/effective Bureau. Ghanem agreed success was possible only if North-South polarization over food security debates was minimized in a reformed CFS. He, too, wanted to see the private sector included on an equal footing and encouraged the U.S. to maintain its strong vocal stance on this point. He also believed CFS should not perform a "monitoring" role on food security - a job to be "outsourced to the HLTF, Alliance Against Hunger, and/or others"). Responding to Charge's point that the CFS should strongly endorse the L'Aquila principles during the upcoming October session, Ghanem welcomed the idea and suggested China, India, or South Africa propose the idea for it to gain traction among non-OECD representatives and civil society organizations.

-----  
Phase 2 - "Global Strategy" Issue  
-----

14. (SBU) Despite repeated U.S. rejection of the CFS negotiating  
UN ROME 00000055 002 OF 005

a "global strategic policy framework" (as advanced strongly by Brazil and others), the idea was pushed off to an expected "Phase Two" of CFS reform whereby a proposal for implementation will be considered at the 2010 Session. After Australia's opening point that talk of a "global strategy" was premature, the U.S. questioned the idea, noting it was unnecessary and overly ambitious for a CFS that had not yet proven itself. (Comment: We believe that 2010 is far too soon to launch implementation of this idea. The EU supports consideration of this item after 2011). The U.S. and Australia offered alternative chapeau text that lengthens the period before any Phase Two would be considered, and conditions such a step upon success with Phase One. Predictably, the suggestion was rejected by Brazil, France, Guatemala, and several NGO's who argued for CFS adoption and negotiation of a global strategy similar to the Comprehensive Framework for Action.

-----  
CFS a Committee - not a New UN Entity  
-----

15. (SBU) A discussion on CFS governance followed, with several members (unopposed) arguing for a small Secretariat and establishment of an "expanded Bureau" vice an "Executive Committee" as proposed in the draft. The debate was assisted by the SYG's letter and by ADG Ghanem, who argued for a small administrative structure for CFS, including a Secretariat no larger than the current one. With the Bureau Chair's assertion that the CFS did not aim to become a separate UN entity, agreement was reached for a light governance structure and small Secretariat. Russia argued for a 14-member "expanded" Bureau (two reps from each regional group), while others preferred an eight-member Bureau (one from each of the seven regional groups and an independent Chair). No agreement was reached on the specific number of Bureau members.

-----  
SYG Ban's Letter  
-----

16. (SBU) After following the course of the day-long plenary, UN SYG Ban's representative, David Nabarro, read a letter (text below) from the SYG noting his concerns with four key issues in CFS reform: the overall "nature" of the revitalized committee (i.e., a new UN structure or still a FAO committee), the need for private sector involvement, participation by all relevant UN system agencies, and coordination with the main UN councils (ECOSOC, UNGA, and the UNSC). The SYG's letter closed by urging CFS members to "take the time to get these issues right~" (COMMENT: By the time Nabarro read the letter, several of these items had been largely resolved in a positive way. Nonetheless, how the CFS will interact with the UN's main councils - particularly the UN Security Council (first time raised in this setting) has not yet been resolved. After the meeting, another FAO ADG confided to USUN staff their view that the letter was divisive, and fed suspicions within FAO and the G-77 that the U.S. was conspiring with Nabarro and the SYG to undermine FAO/Diouf and the CFS process in lieu of a New York and Washington-driven global food security plan. The Chinese Ambassador shared the same broad view with the Charge during a September 8 meeting. END COMMENT).

-----  
Panel of Experts  
-----

UN ROME 00000055 003 OF 005

17. (SBU) Members reviewed draft text and Terms of reference for the High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) proposal, focusing on bracketed text on several relatively minor procedural items. Australia and Canada spoke in favor of a less-structured design, noting their preference for an ad hoc structure relying - as needed - upon resources available mostly through the Rome-based UN agencies. The EU, backed strongly by France, urged acceptance of the draft and pressed for action to set up the panel immediately following the 2009 CFS Session. France confirmed its financial backing for the project to pay start-up costs and staffing for the HLPE. Members did not debate in any detail what subjects the panel might address, focusing only on the draft architecture for the body.

-----  
October Session Agenda  
-----

18. (U) The CFS Session will take place from October 14-17, interrupted by one day of "Earth Day" events on October 16. The main focus of the session will be CFS reform, including agreement on the document described in this message. However, there is also time set aside to discuss the impact on agriculture of the global financial crisis and follow up to the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural

Development (ICARRD). As the agenda includes no discussion of the global food security situation, apart from the financial crisis item, any discussion of the L'Aquila food security principles or the U.S. global food security strategy will have to be addressed during our own interventions and/or in side meetings. It would be helpful if other countries that participated in the L'Aquila Declaration on Food Security, particularly developing states, drew links in their statements between CFS reform and the principles and actions identified at L'Aquila.

-----  
Mission Recommendations  
-----

19. (SBU) Many contentious issues appear to have been resolved in the September 4 session, but a few key problem areas persist. In the time remaining before adoption of the reform plan, we should continue to emphasize that any "Phase Two" be conditioned upon success in Phase One over several years, and that it avoid over-ambitious "global strategies" or intrusive, non-voluntary monitoring mechanisms. With the EU advocating only a two-year delay before proceeding to Phase 2, however, we have only a few allies and will need to continue fighting hard on this issue. Membership is also supportive of permitting the HLPE to proceed along the toned-down structure described in the draft, especially since France will foot the bill for its start-up costs. We can continue to argue for a light structure and supportive role for the country led food security plans, and may also wish to propose topics for its focus in 2010 to help guide its initial work. We should also be prepared to encourage participation by U.S. experts who can help advance our efforts and interests.

-----  
Text of SYG Letter  
-----

110. (U) Text of letter from SYG to CFS Bureau Chair:

UN ROME 00000055 004 OF 005

Madam Chair:

I am pleased that through the High Level Task Force (HLTF) on the Global Food Security Crisis we have had a chance to engage the whole of the UN system in food issues, under the technical guidance of the Food and Agriculture Organization and its Director General who is Vice Chair of our Task Force. I look forward to working on food security issues within the General Assembly and G20 meetings later this month with FAO Director General Jacques Diouf, IFAD President Kanayo Nwanze, WFP Executive Director of WFP, Josette Sheeran, and other members of the UN System contributing to food security.

I look forward to working with them on the follow-up to the ground-breaking political and financial commitments on food security made by 26 nations at L'Aquila, Italy, in July this year. I am pleased to be invited to co-host the forthcoming summit on food security in Rome during November this year with

Director-General Diouf, President Nwanze and Executive Director Sheeran. I see this as an important time for our High Level Task Force to strengthen its joint efforts in the light of the many new developments now underway.

I have read of the proposals for the reform of the Committee on World Food Security. I congratulate you, the members of your bureau and the Contact Group for the progress that has been made. I appreciate that there has been a series of consultations and intense negotiations with a number of stakeholders. I understand, however, there are a number of unresolved questions in the latest draft of the reform proposals. These have implications for the functioning of the United Nations system as a whole.

First: There is lack of clarity on the nature of the revitalized committee: is it a new and substantive UN system entity or a coordinating structure that works closely with, and in support of, the existing entities throughout the system?

Second: There seems to be no agreement on the extent to which representatives of the private sector (with a legitimate interest and role to play in food security issues) are to be involved in the new committee. My High Level Task Force has taken the view that work on food security has to engage with the private sector.

Third: Sufficient attention must be paid to ensuring that all relevant UN system agencies (and their members) are fully involved in the committee's work. As well as FAO, WFP and IFAD, I am particularly keen that humanitarian agencies (especially those concerned with nutrition), trade bodies (including the WTO and UNCTAD) and the full range of development agencies - including those concerned with refugees and people unable to enjoy the right to food - be fully

engaged, and that their membership and staff be part of the new CFS (and be considered when staff are identified for the CFS' small secretariat).

Fourth: I would encourage you to ensure that the main UN councils - ECOSOC, the General Assembly and the Security Council - be made fully aware of, and invited to comment on, your plans for the reform of the CFS before they are finalized. I would encourage you to engage with the membership of the GA on these issues at country level and through their representatives in Geneva and New York as well as Rome given the range of interests that have to be taken into

account when attempts are made to improve food security and

UN ROME 00000055 005 OF 005

realize the elusive first Millennium Development Goal.

I would urge you to take the time to get these issues right as I believe that such work will - in the long term - make for a system that better serves the interests of those who are affected by or at risk of food and nutritional insecurity.

BAN Ki-Moon, Secretary-General, United Nations

Chair, High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis

4th September 2009

End text of SYG letter.  
GLOVERMP